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Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Grant

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Abstract

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Keywords

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Grant

Fall 2021 Semester

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Kean Receives State Grant to Roll Out Electric Buses

Feb 17, 2021



Electric buses similar to this – but decorated in Kean colors – are expected to be coming to the Kean campus.

Kean University received nearly \$2 million in state grant money to purchase a fleet of seven electric shuttle buses that will provide environmental benefits on campus and beyond.

The project is being funded through a \$100 million statewide clean transportation program announced by Gov. Phil Murphy.

"Kean is proud to be part of the effort to improve air quality and reduce the effects of climate change in our state," said Kean President Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D. "By bringing electric buses to Kean, we are helping to promote a clean environment both here on campus and in our surrounding communities."

At a press conference in Newark on Tuesday, Gov. Murphy touted clean transportation projects as a major step toward addressing climate change, achieving environmental justice and moving the state toward 100% clean energy by 2050.

The new buses will replace most of the University's aging fleet of three full-size buses, four trolleys and two small buses.

Kean applied in 2018 for grant funding to replace University shuttle buses with electric versions. The Kean project, called "Fleet Sweep," was driven by alumnus Emil Bustamante '18, a sustainability science major. After graduation, he worked part-time as an academic specialist/sustainability officer at Kean.

"This is a huge achievement for Kean," he said. "This is part of a bigger thing than all of us. The climate is changing, and we can have an impact on this. We can be the innovators."

Bustamante, of Elizabeth, who is now a teacher in Elizabeth and also owns a barber shop, said he continued to follow up on the project even after he left Kean. He said he was near tears Tuesday when he learned the University received the funding.

In the geographic area around Kean's main campus, about 325,000 people will benefit from the impact of emissions reduction, he said.

"I saw this could make a big impact. It's not only going to save money on diesel, gas and oil, it's going to decrease our carbon footprint by a huge amount," Bustamante said.

Acquiring the new buses is expected to take at least six months, but may take longer due to pandemic-related delays.

Across the state, other projects funded by Murphy's initiative include electric garbage trucks, school buses, cargo-handling equipment and electrified NJ Transit buses. New Jersey City University also received funding for electric shuttle buses.

"The investments we are announcing signify our commitment to environmental justice and equity, while building a cleaner economy that works for all," said Murphy, who on Tuesday also took action creating the state Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy. "Together, these initiatives will make New Jersey stronger, fairer—and greener—for generations to come."

The \$100 million in statewide funding is coming from the proceeds of the state's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust Fund, a fund created by a settlement over emissions violations reached by Volkswagen with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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